

February 29, 2000

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In My Opinion
The Oregonian
1320 SW Broadway
Portland, OR 97201

Much has been said and written regarding the breaching of the Snake River dams and then seeking alternatives to the dams on the Columbia itself. Many of those in favor of this action seem to be proceeding with an unapologetic tunnel vision and a "save the salmon" rallying cry which betrays their true agenda; exploitation of the salmon by other means or simply a desire to remove unsightly dams.

Of course as a union representative for many of the tow-boaters who make their living plying the waters of the Columbia and Snake River systems I have a vested interest in retaining the system now in place. I also could make emotional arguments about a vanishing way of life and the negative effects of dam removal on the sub-culture of the waterfront and river workers, a unique way of life and living that I have grown to love.

But I wish to go beyond self-interest here; beyond the damage to my people and the farmers and others who will be financially injured or destroyed if we continue with this misguided policy.

First of all the sediment behind all of the dams is polluted. Over the years waste material from towns, nuclear plants, fertilized fields and yards and perhaps the Umitilla nerve gas depository have settled to the river bottom and are held back by the dams. As the dams are breached this material will head down stream. No one knows what the affect would be but it might behoove us to find out before we go too far.

In the East where dams are scarce fossil fuels are burned to generate electricity. Unfortunately the burning of fossil fuels also generates acid rain and pollution. We haven't had to deal with acid rain as of yet. Perhaps the time has come.

One tug and barge tow can carry the equivalent of over 500 truck loads or over 140 hopper car loads but the rail lines are already at nearly full capacity. The increased pressure and danger on our roads and the increased volume of fossil fuel burned by trucks if the dams are breached is difficult to imagine. Barges haul much more tonnage with much less fuel and no road damage.

In addition, as any one who has been privy to old photographs of Portland can attest; dams are an effective means of flood control. What will be the cost when the flood waters return?

What of the salmon? I don't know exactly what effect the dams have on the salmon but I do know that dams are only part of the problem. Waterways without dams

SNAKE RIVER, AND ENSURING HEALTHY HABITAT FOR SALMON ON PRIVATE AND PUBLIC LANDS THROUGH
OUT THE COLUMBIA BASIN.

THIS RESTORATION OF HABITAT AND SAFE PASSAGE NEEDS TO INCLUDE ALL CRITICAL SALMON
HABITAT IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST IF WE ARE TO HAVE A HEALTHY SALMON INDUSTRY. THE COLUMBIA
RIVER WATERSHED IS CRITICAL AT THE PRESENT TIME.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Cliff Lobaugh".

Cliff Lobaugh

3340 Frotz Cove

Juneau, Alaska 99801



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**
Walla Walla District

Lower Snake River Juvenile Salmon Migration Draft Feasibility Report/ Environmental Impact Statement

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers invites any person who has an interest in the Draft FR/EIS or represents a group of people that have an interest in the subject matter of this study, to make comments. The Corps will respond to the comments related to their Draft FR/EIS in their next NEPA document produced for the Lower Snake River Juvenile Salmon Migration Feasibility Report/EIS. Comments will be accepted through March 31, 2000.

Name:

Organization:

Comments:

Send comments by

E-mail: salmonstudy@usace.army.mil

Fax: (509) 527-7832

Mail: Department of the Army, Walla Walla District Corps of Engineers, Attention: Lower Snake River Study, 201 North Third Avenue, Walla Walla, Washington 99362-1876

are also suffering. Is over-fishing a problem? No one wants to touch that one. What about logging and pollution?

We need to look at every alternative before we attack our system of dams. If barging and piping of salmon fingerlings around the dams isn't effective perhaps by pass streams should be considered whereby an easily accessible alternative route is created around the dams. I understand that there may be technology available to enhance the salmon's natural homing skills in locating these byways. This method seems preferable to a fish ladder and much less costly than breaching.

In closing I would emphasize the importance of studying every aspect of this situation before we charge ahead and perhaps in our attempt to save the salmon we not only fail to accomplish that end but in our zeal we destroy or diminish much of what we now hold dear.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Jim Dunnigan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jim Dunnigan
Regional Director
Columbia River Region
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